

JANUARY 2009

The regular meeting of the Heath Township Board was held on January 12, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. in the Heath Township Hall.

Supervisor Jones called the meeting to order and Lindholm offered opening prayer. The previous months minutes were approved.

Chief Haverdink presented the annual fire report and the 2009 capitol and general budget. Discussion followed and a motion was made by Boer man and supported by Lindholm to adopt the capitol items budget. All ayes. Motion carried. A motion was made by Schipper and supported by Boerman to adopt the general budget. All ayes. Motion carried.

Shawn McKenney from the Allegan Conservation District presented a report by the DNR and the DEQ in regards to the Rabbit River/Hamilton Dam. They are proposing removal of the Hamilton Dam to improve fisheries in the Rabbit River, Kalamazoo River and the Great Lakes Fishery by reopening historic habitat and reducing water temperatures near the current dam. The project will improve access to the river for recreational opportunities and improve pedestrian safety at the Heath Township Park. Since Heath Township is the owner of the dam, they are requesting approval to apply for a \$55,000 grant that would further research this project. It would cost the township approximately \$150,000-\$250,000 to bring the dam up to the proper code and \$400,000 to remove it at no cost to the citizens. The board emphasized the aesthetics of the dam and the trestle is important in relationship to Hamilton and its citizens. The board requested a late March meeting hosted by the state and Fish and Wildlife Services to get more input from the community before the board has to make any decisions in regards to the dam. A motion was made by Boer man and supported by Lindholm to approve the request to apply for the grant. All ayes. Motion carried.

The citizens group interested in community policing was present to ask for clarification on what is required of them and what help they can expect from the township board. Sheila stated they might need to hold community meetings to gather petition signatures to place this before the residents as a ballot proposal. If, and when, the board feels they have the needed support and documentation, we would move forward. Ron noted that in tough economic times it is hard to gain support for any type of millage requests.

Jeff Lampen was present to request a letter from the township board to send along with his application for a liquor license for the Trestle Stop Restaurant. He stated that the judge has signed off on all the lawsuits, as this was a stipulation previously made by the township. Sheila will check with our lawyer on this. A discussion followed as to how parties are currently allowed to have beer, wine and liquor on the premises when he has no license. Mr. Lampen stated neither he nor any of his workers are serving it and the parties sign a waiver and are encouraged to add liability to their own insurance policies. Sheila questioned the legality of this and how he can charge parties \$5.00 per person for cleanup of the parking lot when alcohol is brought in. Mr. Lampen denied this charge.

Mr. Lampen also requested he be treated fairly in regards to past issues the township has had with his business. Ron stated that there have been errors on both sides, everyone needs to learn from this and everyone needs to pull permits and abide by zoning if they wish to be treated fairly.

The township bills were presented. A motion was made by Boerman and supported by Lindholm to approve. All ayes. Motion carried.

The fire department bills were presented. A motion was made by Boerman and supported by Schipper to approve. All ayes. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Boerman and supported by Meiste to adjourn at 8:50. All ayes. Motion carried.

Sheila Meiste,
Clerk